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## ABSTRACT

Recent research into television crime programs has revealed startling industry attitudes that directly contradict either generally accepted television research methods, i.e. Nielson ratings, or conventional ethical and moral codes. Interviews with 48 producers, writers, and directors indicated stunning misconceptions and irresponsible attitudes concerning the effects of television crime programs. The research showed that television uses violence because it is a saleable program commodity and also because violence in a dramatic setting polarize good-evil situations. In regard to the criticism that many children are viewers of crime programs, as indicated by the Nielson ratings, the industry simply refuses to acknowledge the statistics. Also along the same lines, the industry, now citing research documents, arrogantly asserts that children are able to distinguish television action from reality, without recognizing that such research is admittedly incomplete. This document summarizes the highlights of television research done by a Michigan State University research team. (MC)

ED 077185

# Violence is a Saleable Commodity . . .

**Michigan State University research team documents irresponsible attitudes and misconceptions prevalent among producers, writers, directors, and censors of TV crime programs.**

*(Editor's Note: The following is the complete text of the executive summary of a research project: "Violence in Television: the Industry Looks at Itself," conducted by Michigan State University senior faculty members Colby Lewis and Thomas F. Baldwin. This research was one of five MSU projects which were part of the U. S. Surgeon General's investigations into the effects of TV violence. These projects were supervised by Dr. Bradley S. Greenberg, associate professor of the MSU College of Communication Arts. The report was issued in April 1971.)*

In July, 1970, two senior faculty members from Michigan State University interviewed 48 producers, writers and directors for 18 network television series, including censor representatives from the three major networks. The shows were all of the action-adventure type, those most prone to incorporate violence in their program material.

Although most industry respondents did not believe that young people were a substantial segment of their audience, Nielsen data indicated otherwise. Twelve of the 18 shows had audiences of more than 2 million in the 2-11 and in the 12-17 age groups. Some were in the 5-6 million range.

The semi-structured interviews were all conducted in the Los Angeles area and ranged up to four hours in length. They focused on these questions:

Why is there violence in such programs?

What implicit and explicit sanctions exist about the use of violence?

What is the industry's response to critics who protest the quantity or quality of violence depicted?

This summary highlights the key findings from the main report. For elaboration and supportive data, the full text should be examined.

*Why is there violence?*

. . . In drama, conflict is essential. For the program creators, conflict is synonymous with violence.

. . . In TV drama, where swift resolutions of problems are necessary, violence is convenient to bring that about.

. . . Violence in action-adventure drama was perceived

## NABB COMMENTARY

The study summarized here is no doubt the most comprehensive review of industry viewpoints toward violence in entertainment yet undertaken. Because Dr. Bradley and his staff have been meticulous in withholding their feelings and personal conclusions, their summation impels the addition of commentary which we have provided in these adjacent columns.

Broadcasters live with Nielsen figures. Certainly they should be responsible for knowing what they are.

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Frank Orme, Ex. Dir.

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## SUMMATION OF RESEARCH (Cont.)

by the producers and others as a means of shifting the viewer from the world of self-tension to that of artificial tension. The latter offers release from personal sources of tension, reassurance, and a symbolic opportunity to get back at somebody or something.

... These shows polarize good-evil. The story line is simplistic, people and situations are exaggerated. This is done because it is believed that the programs cannot be subtle, that the clash of ideas will not hold an audience long, that action or deeds are needed, not deliberation.

... Mortal jeopardy is central to any such show, because physical danger is easier to recognize.

... As to potential areas of conflict which might be examined dramatically, man against man is the most acceptable. Man against nature is too costly, man against God is too intellectual, and man against himself leaves too little opportunity for action.

The industry people claim that the audience expects violence, that if it does not occur, they will tune out. With that violence premise, situations are selected which promote physical jeopardy.

... The program creators say they reject violence unless it is motivated by plot or character. But the milieu of the show demands such plots and characters.

... To attract and keep mass audiences, violence is judged to be necessary. Action is equated with violent action.

... They claim the networks view violence as a saleable program commodity.

... Any serious cutback in the presentation of violence was judged to hurt the popularity of these programs in foreign markets.

... In visualizing violence, 'good' directors shoot protection shots, i.e., a version which has less violence, in case the original version has to be scrapped.

... Major segments of action-adventure programs are about violence and violent people. This appears to be so because there is a perceived need to cater to the largest possible audience, vast quantities of material must be produced in a restricted time frame, there is a shortage of writing talent, successful shows often are imitated, and an established series format constrains innovation.

*What is the role of the censor and the industry's attitude toward him?*

... The censor perceives himself as a buffer for the producer -- between the network and the public, Congress, FCC.

... Censors can influence a program from story outline through finished film: Censor approval remains tentative until he sees the finished film.

... Given admittedly ambiguous criteria, the censors' suggestions may be negotiable.

... The program creators claim there is considerable self-censorship. Writers claim that they don't have unacceptable ideas anymore, given their expectations as to what the censor will do.

... The censors urge the writers and directors not to

## NABB COMMENTARY

This defines a very narrow slice of human experience. The definition then limits human experience to this narrow slice. To always need to resolve conflict by a simple violent solution is neither realistic nor useful. It leads to blowing up the bank instead of talking to the president.

Polarization is not constructive.

This is a judgment. If you believe this is so, and program accordingly, then you have made an artificial situation which perpetuates itself ... And because of the nature of commercial broadcasting, this artificial system becomes all there is. But in real life all conflict is not man against man. We need to learn to live man with man.

This is the core of the industry position. It has paid off in hundreds of millions of dollars in sales.

Yet foreign observers disparage our obsession with violence. Censorship and control of children's entertainment abroad is more concerned with violence than sex. Numerous countries have rejected American TV programs because of their high incidence of violence.

So now we are not talking about creative freedom at all, but writing to pattern within an artificial, created system. The censors' request induces mediocrity and irresponsibility because the writers (1) don't write

## SUMMATION OF RESEARCH (Cont.)

self-censor, to write freely and then let the censors make suggestions.

... The network criteria for becoming a censor include knowing the TV industry, having a college education, being sensitive to the public, worldly, diplomatic, and meticulous.

... The program creators say that the censors are not motivated by concern for the social effects of violence, but by what will be acceptable to most.

... They believe that limiting expressions of violence goes against being true-to-life; that if TV entertainment glosses over violence, the medium will lose its credibility.

... Among the censors, social research on the effects of televised violence is either not known or not considered of practical value for making editorial decisions. There are no social scientists on the staffs of the west coast censor offices.

... The creative people most generally describe their relationship with the censors as an adversary one. They feel there is interference with their attempts to create dramatic climaxes, some general lack of judgment, lack of ability to interpret public standards.

... The producers and directors generally acknowledge that there may be reason to censor 'others' but not 'me.'

... The censors say the existing code statements are not definitive, do not permit them to solve many concrete problems, and do not take context into consideration.

... The industry people have mixed feelings as to how sensitive the censors are to context. They say there is too much counting of acts of violence.

... A script may contain more violence than the program people want, in order to give the censor something to delete. What remains in the altered script may be what the creators really wanted -- and the censor is happy, too.

... There are context-free guidelines on the use of violence which are acknowledged by the censors and the program creators. They all agree that they do not wish to present unmotivated, gratuitous violence, acts of violence capable of being imitated by children, situations in which children, women or Indians are in mortal jeopardy, or the physical consequences of violence.

... The program people claim that a double standard exists, that TV news, movies and sports are not subject to the same censorship.

... They question whether the censorship of violence is functional. If the viewer must imagine the details, rather than seeing them, as when direct violence is circumvented, the effect on the viewer may be greater.

*What is the industry's response to its critics vis a vis violence?*

... The program creators contend that the child learns early to distinguish television action from reality. This differentiation, they claim, occurs as the child directly experiences violence, by which time the 'normal' child has also learned the social sanctions about violence.

... They resent the paradox which condemns TV violence and accepts war and other forms of violence.

... They perceive that the attitudes of adults and

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freely, and (2) do not have any on-going responsibility for the final form.

A responsible measure of what is *suitable* for children (see Nielsen figures above) is not what they find acceptable.

But we are not talking about true-to-life. We are talking about simplifying, polarizing, and violent conflict, all of which are *untrue*.

This is quite simply a definition of irresponsibility. On what basis do you make decisions if not on social research? By their own statements, "acceptability" to these people has to do with selling, and that is all it has to do with. Manipulation, pure and simple.

Nonsense. Gratuitous violence is part of the system they have defined. Any act of violence is capable of imitation, as is the solving of all problems by violence.

... Violence without consequences is hardly true to life, is it?

They have already said they don't care much about research. This is an antisocial judgment. Either common-sense or research could tell them so, if either were available to them. Where is the "normal" child going to learn sanctions about violence when television does not describe such sanctions, and when broadcasters define their function as independent of social sanctions about violence?

## SUMMATION OF RESEARCH (Cont.)

society toward violence are a far more important influence on the child than what TV has to say.

. . . Most believe that TV could trigger a disturbed viewer, but that such people will be triggered anyhow, and that TV cannot cater to a small minority of disturbed viewers.

. . . They think that chastising TV for such situations diverts attention from more fundamental social causes of violence.

. . . There was disagreement over whether the painful consequences of violence to the victim should be shown. A majority of producers and writers said that showing the 'hurt' of violence is distasteful, that they did not wish to instruct anyone in the horrors of violence.

. . . There was considerable belief in the cathartic properties of watching action-adventure programs.

. . . Parents were criticized for failing to be responsible for their children's viewing. Given that high ratings continue for these programs, they claimed, parents are not objecting en masse.

. . . The respondents condemned the methods of government inquiry into the effects of televised violence, the qualifications of government officials to judge the effects of television, and the motivations of those leading such inquiries. They contended that opportunism was a prime factor.

. . . The industry people argued that the action-adventure programs may be speaking against violence. They said that major themes of these programs include the notions that revenge itself is an empty goal, and that violence is immoral except when used in self or national defense, or law enforcement.

. . . Further, such programs, they believe, caution about how minor transgressions can turn into major tragedies; that violence, when used, may subvert the best of personal intentions; that violence prepares young viewers to better cope with reality, particularly those from the isolated environs of the suburbs.

. . . Heroes in these programs were perceived as setting a worthy example, that their nobility could be emulated. The hero does not have a flip attitude toward death, does not initiate violence except as a last resort, and acts in the framework of the law — bending it perhaps but not breaking it.

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The problem is not so much *disturbed* children as it is disadvantaged and disaffected children who are seduced by material benefits and misled by simplistic violent solutions. This is a fundamental cause of antisocial views and actions. TV has a major role in this.

The catharsis theory as applied here is a highly misleading rationalization by industry apologists. In this situation, it is discredited by responsible social scientists.

It is true that parents have a responsibility which they often neglect, but parents are subjected to the industry's overwhelming control of the medium and the well-fostered confusion concerning the significance of scientific research.

These people with heavy vested interests in crime and violence challenge the motives of public-spirited citizens and health professionals who try to protect the welfare of children.

These accolades for the "lessons" to be learned from excessively violent programs are gross distortions of the actual social attitudes that are fostered by most crime-and-violence shows.

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### PETITIONERS WIN SKIRMISHES, WAIT FOR FCC DECISION IN CHALLENGE TO KTTV LICENSE

More than a year has passed, and more than 1,500 pages of legal briefs and exhibits have been filed with the FCC in connection with the Petition to Deny the license renewal application of Metromedia's Los Angeles Channel 11 by four organizations. The Petition, originated by the National Association for Better Broadcasting (NABB), was joined by Action for Children's Television (ACT), the Mexican-American Political Association (MAPA), and the San Fernando Valley Fair Housing Council. The Petition was filed November 15, 1971. It alleges many gross violations by the station of its responsibilities to serve the public interest throughout the three-year license period which expired December 1, 1971.

In March of 1972 Metromedia filed with the Commission a massive three-volume Opposition to the Petition to Deny. On September 12 the Petitioners filed with the FCC an extensive Reply to the station's Opposition. Citizens Communications Center, Washington, D. C., is handling the legal aspects for the petitioning organizations. Petitioners have indicated their intention of carrying their protest through an appeal to the U. S. District Court of Appeals should the FCC fail to revoke the license or to order a public hearing to resolve the matters at issue.

During the past few months the Petitioners have won two skirmishes against the station's defense. The FCC hearing examiner first ruled that KTTV must open its financial records to inspection by the Petitioners. Metromedia appealed this ruling, but the Commission denied the appeal and again ruled in favor of the Petitioners.

Major charges against KTTV for its license period ended December 1, 1971 include: broadcasting a vast quantity of old and violence-ridden programs for children; repeated violations of the Fairness Doctrine; failure to fulfill special and urgent needs of minority segments of the Los Angeles community; and using very old movies which have been rerun interminably in the Los Angeles market as their "fountainhead" source of entertainment.

The Opposition filed by KTTV included personal attacks upon the integrity, motives, and professional competence of those who participated in the challenge to

## TELEVISION FOR THE FAMILY

### 1973 EDITION

Again, as in past years since 1953, the National Association for Better Broadcasting is publishing its evaluation of television series widely broadcast by commercial stations in the United States. In this issue of the quarterly newsletter the evaluations of the new season's evening network shows and of network programs for children begin on page four. Coverage of many other programs will appear in the following (Spring 1973) issue.

NABB's purpose is to provide a guide to teachers and parents in the selection and discussion of programming for children who come under their care. Chairman of the evaluations committee is Elizabeth Longstreet, a specialist in childhood education and mass media chairman for the 250,000-member Los Angeles Tenth District Parent-Teacher Association.

It is important to emphasize again that these evaluations are designed as a guide — not an edict. The NABB most emphatically does not encourage the use of these evaluations as arbitrary controls of children's viewing. There are solid reasons for this. First, the committee itself makes no pretense of infallibility in its conclusions. Programs change, and they vary in content from episode to episode. Also, children themselves vary greatly in their attitudes and reactions.

In addition to the program-by-program alphabetical listings beginning on page four, there is an overview

## Violence Fills More than Half of Networks' Prime-Time Programs

In this season when scientific investigation has finally caught up with common-sense judgment by establishing a causal relationship between viewing of violence and antisocial behavior, commercial network prime-time television is still overwhelmed by crime and brutality. More than half of the evening programming provided by the networks is comprised of crime or war melodrama. The percentage varies a little according to the content of the 17 weekly hours of network movies, but these are usually violent.

A typical week for the 63 network prime-time hours lines up about like this: violent melodrama series and movies — 35 hours; drama — 9 hours; comedy — 9 hours; variety — 7 hours; sports — 2 hours; public affairs — 1 hour.

Because of the large amount of mediocrity, it is tempting to describe the new season's programming as shoddy, shallow, and unresponsive to the social and entertainment needs of the nation's viewers. However, a generalization of any kind is neither fair nor accurate.

A season that has introduced *The Waltons*, the delightfully humorous drama aired by CBS on Thursday evenings, is not all bad. There is the brilliantly produced *Julie Andrews Hour* Wednesday nights on ABC. *Anna and the King*, although cancelled by CBS, has been a first-class highly creative program. Other new shows of unusual interest include *Maude* (CBS), the *Bob Newhart Show* (CBS), *The Little People* (NBC).

There are a number of holdover series that rise above the "wasteland" classification. *All in the Family*, *Marcus Welby, M.D.*, *The Bold Ones* (being cancelled), *Owen Marshall: Counsellor at Law* and *Room 222*. The last-named program merits a special mention. Like *The Waltons*, it is written, performed, and produced by people who really care about the characters in the series, and the situations in which these people are involved.

Among the new comedy series the NABB committee placed CBS's

*Sandy Duncan Show* and ABC's *Temperatures Rising* at the bottom of the list.

The most disturbing series, from the point of view of excessive violence and sordid story content are ABC's *Streets of San Francisco*, *The FBI*, *The Rookies*, *Mod Squad*, and *The Men* (alternating *The Delphi Bureau*, and *Jigsaw*); CBS's *Mission: Impossible*, *Mannix*, and *Hawaii Five-O*; and NBC's *Search*. NBC also had *Banyon*, another rough one, but this has been cancelled. Many made-for-TV movies also feature graphic terror and brutality, but because of varying content from week to week it is not possible to evaluate the many movies broadcast by the

networks. Some are excellent.

The surprise, and to many the shock of the season is the sudden cancellation of *Bonanza*. In the view of the NABB committee, the *Bonanza* programs this past fall have been the best of the past several years. The show grew up just in time to be chopped down.

There are a number of well produced melodramas and westerns that have entertainment values for adult viewers. These include *Alias Smith and Jones* and *Kung Fu* (monthly) on ABC; the alternating *McCloud*, *McMillan and Wife*, *Columbo*, and *Hec Ramsey* (Sundays) and *Ironside* on NBC; and *Cannon* on CBS. It is a matter of family discrimination whether or not children are permitted to watch these.

The areas of permissiveness in language and action have extended

(Continued on Back Page)

## Variety Critic Scorches Saturday Animated Programs for Children

Writing in the September 13 issue of *Variety*, reviewer Bill Greeley noted that the three networks this season have premiered 13 new half-hours in the Saturday morning "kid-vid block," and that 12 of these new shows are cartoons.

Greeley continued: "The animation is uniformly cheap and buckeye, the scoring sounds as though it all spumed out of the same rock n' roll computer. The scripting is shockingly hackneyed.

"... Someone fed the yock console laughing gas. The laugh-track is used unsparingly to punctuate the fact that any and all of the slam-bang-crashing action is meant to be funny, not dramatic. Weird creatures abound, but they are mutants of the old, morbid, grotesque monsters and freaks that saturated the schedule before the public caught on.

"Much of the new cartoon product could be classed as situation comedy. It is not children's programming. It's sort of shrunken adult programming. And if it is evident that public pressure has forced the networks to clean up the nightmarish violence which dominated the schedules a couple of seasons back, the

programers and producers have still managed to outflank the protestors. For it is necessary to chance redundancy to charge that this new programming is almost unanimously witless, heartless, charmless, tasteless, and artless. Whether it is harmless may well again become an issue."

Greeley, covering only the Saturday daytime shows, acclaimed CBS' *Children's Film Festival*, and had limited praise for NBC's *Sealab 2020* and *Around the World in 80 Days* and ABC's *Kid Power*. He also had some kind words for NBC's live game show, *Runaround*. The other programs, named individually and with added caustic comment, were assigned by Greeley to the dismal level described in the above paragraphs.

Unfortunately, NABB's annual search for creative entertainment for children on the commercial networks did little more than confirm Greeley's judgment concerning most of the programs he covered, although the committee's evaluations are less harsh regarding some of the shows. (NABB's evaluations, program by program, appear alphabetically beginning on page four.)

## Educational Services Division to Expand NABB 1973 Operations

Culminating 22 years of distribution of printed materials on a more or less irregular and uncoordinated schedule, the National Association for Better Broadcasting has formed an Educational Services Division that will unify and expand the writing, production, acquisition, and distribution of materials related to social and consumer interests in broadcasting. The service, which will begin in January, is directed to teachers, students, librarians, committee chairmen of organizations and groups, and individuals concerned with the effects of broadcast programming on viewing audiences.

### Advisory Board Members

The project's advisory board is composed of the publisher of a magazine for parents and three authorities in communications and audiovisual education. These are: Morton Edwards, publisher-editor of *Today's Child*, and professors Edgar Dale, Ohio State University; Robert Lewis Shayon, Annenberg School of Communications; and Harry J. Skornia, University of Illinois.

Frank Orme, writer, editor, and executive vice president of NABB, has been appointed as director of the new operation. Others on the editorial staff include Elizabeth Longstreet, teacher-writer who has headed the NABB evaluations committee for the past several years, and Andrew Aguilar, of the community services department of Children's Television Workshop.

### Service is Comprehensive

The service will include the NABB quarterly newsletter (in which this story is printed), original articles published separately, original short pieces in one-page and two-page format, reprints of columns and editorials from various publications, and items gathered from other groups and associations for distribution through the NABB resource center. In addition, there will be a selection of materials from the existing NABB "background library," as well as a free reference service to assist in locating material related to specific subjects.

In announcing the new NABB division, NABB president James V. Bennett referred to the "obvious

need" for a resource center such as that which is being established. He said that textbooks alone cannot supply the need of students and teachers to know "what's going on now," regarding the public's tremendous stake in broadcast communication. He expects NABB's educational service to balance, at least in part, the present situation in which content and "slant" of easily obtainable materials are dominated by the special interests of the commercial broadcasting industry.

Bennett said that the NABB service will be built upon a solid editorial policy platform that begins with the acceptance of certain facts, conclusions, and principles stemming from public ownership of the airwaves and from the rights and responsibilities that grow from that ownership.

### Editorial Responsibility

Fundamental to the editorial policy is the intent to provide a continuous flow of information and commentary so that students and others may use the service as a stimulant to active participation in the affairs of broadcasting. "By participation," Bennett explained, "we mean anything from personal discrimination in program selection or guidance of viewing by children to community efforts to upgrade the services provided by station licensees in their areas."

The service will be completely flexible and adaptable to the specific needs of groups or individuals. All items, including subscriptions to the NABB quarterly newsletter, may be ordered separately. Printed items are available in classroom lots at nominal charges. Further details and a catalog list of materials and services may be obtained without charge by writing to NABB headquarters.

NABB, founded in 1949, is incorporated as a national nonprofit educational institution.

### Publication Suspended

Due to a combination of unforeseeable circumstances, it has been necessary to temporarily suspend publication of the NABB "Better Radio and Television" quarterly. With this issue publication is resumed. All paid subscriptions have been extended to cover the three missing issues.

### JAMES BENNETT RE-ELECTED CIVIC LEADER JOINS NABB

James V. Bennett, president of NABB since 1965, has been elected to another term as chief of the organization. One new member has been added to the board of directors and to the executive committee, attorney John G. Dalessio, who is executive director of the Greater Los Angeles Urban Coalition.

Other officers and executive committee members elected for one-year terms are: Frank Orme, executive vice president; Harry Skornia, second vice president; Jack Heeger, treasurer; Gertrude Blackstock, recording secretary; Elizabeth Longstreet, corresponding secretary; Arnold Johnson, executive committee; Clayton Stouffer, executive committee; Jerome Weinstein, executive committee; and Dr. Isidore Zif-erstein, executive committee.

### Other directors are:

Andrew Aguilar, Syd Cassyd, Richard Clewmenen, Dr. Edgar Dale, Morton Edwards, Arthur J. Freund, Robert Thayer Jordan, Frank K. Kelly, Mrs. Elizabeth Livingston, Morris Marmon, Dr. Paul Popenoe, Dr. Taher A. Razik, Rev. Simon Scanlon, Dr. John C. Schwarzwald-der, Robert Lewis Shayon, Dr. Dallas Smythe, Louis C. Sudler, and Mrs. Thomas G. Wight.

### ACT FILES PROTEST

Action for Children's Television has filed with the FCC a Fairness Doctrine complaint, charging that a 60-second spot prepared by the Television Information Office of the National Association of Broadcasters unfairly extolls children's TV on commercial stations. ACT demands that stations airing the spot be required to balance it with opposing views.



# COMMERCIAL NETWORK CHILDREN'S SHOWS

READERS WILL NOTE immediately that children's programs normally televised on noncommercial stations are not included among the following alphabetically listed programs which comprise the bulk of the child fare currently provided by the commercial networks. We have not mixed apples and oranges. The NABB committee is preparing an overview report on noncommercial shows for children for the forthcoming issue of the "Better Radio and Television" quarterly.

**ABC AFTERSCHOOL SPECIALS** (monthly). After criticizing Hanna-Barbera animated productions for children consistently over the past seasons, it is a pleasure for the NABB committee to acclaim the beautiful, poignant, and dramatically entertaining hour produced by this firm to open ABC's monthly venture into quality programming for youngsters. "Last of the Curlews" was artistically sound, and it integrated constructive materials without sacrificing audience appeal. Let's hope that ABC maintains the standard it set in this premiere program.

**AMAZING CHAN AND THE CHAN CLAN** - CBS, Saturdays. A new animated series which skirts the heavy-handed violence of TV's now discredited super-hero shows, but which is still barren in storyline and characterization. Two clusters of four commercial spots and one of three were aired within one 25-minute program (September 30). This is sadly typical of network commercial excesses.

**ARCHIE'S TV FUNNIES** - CBS, Saturdays. Raucous, disorganized, confused, and completely unsuitable for children or anyone else. An irritating laugh-track adds to the uproar. Includes many old "funnies" such as *Dick Tracy*, *Katzenjammer Kids*, etc.

**AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS** - NBC, Saturdays. Diminution and distortion of classic chase, reduced to very ordinary cops and robbers. Mediocre.

**THE BARKLEYS** - NBC, Saturdays. An animated dog family crudely patterned from the *All in the Family* series. Incredible hokum. A waste of time. Intrusive laugh track.

**THE BRADY KIDS** - ABC, Saturdays. A new animated series fashioned from the evening live-action show. It loses practically all appealing qualities in the transition. A single "story" threads through the half-hour. Program stopwatched contained 12 commercials.

**BUGS BUNNY** - CBS, Saturdays. Three individual episodes in the 25-minute period. Fast action, with characters emerging unharmed from being slugged, clubbed, thrown, and blown up. Production quality is superior to most of today's cheap and limited animation treatment. This is the prototype of all hit and chase shows. Fine for adults or family viewing, but gives a poor notion of cause and effect for younger children.

**CAPTAIN KANGAROO** - CBS, Monday-Friday. In its evolving and low-key format, *Captain Kangaroo* still stands out as commercial television's most impressive regular show for pre-schoolers. Emphasis is on filmed visits to historic sites and recreation of early-day Americana. The pace is leisurely, and the commercials are not larded in as they are on the typical kiddie shows. Program is substantially improved by freeing Robert Keeshan (The Captain) from delivering commercials.

**CBS CHILDREN'S FILM FESTIVAL** - CBS, Saturdays. Beyond question this is the finest weekly program for youngsters on commercial television. A wide variety of superior films from all over the world, inimitably introduced by Kukla, Fran, and Ollie. Reruns or not, these films can bear repetition. Appeal extends to teenagers and adults.

**CURIOSITY SHOP** - ABC, Sundays. These are reruns of the show that was much heralded as a creative innovation in children's programming a year ago, but which fell far short of its advance billing. Compared with the standard noise and confusion of other shows, this is a better effort, but it too often mixes grotesque characters with fast-paced sequences that have been deplored by child welfare specialists over the past years.

**FAT ALBERT AND THE COSBY KIDS** - CBS, Saturdays. This program is refreshing, both because of Cosby's presence and for the fact that it presents black youngsters in animation. (Until this season minority characters have been almost totally absent from the animated shows.) Now let's hope that Cosby keeps a hand in, and that the producers give us something more than threadbare stories. Early episodes show promise. They deal with problems of interest to youngsters, and offer constructive resolution rather than endless stereotypes and misunderstanding.

**FLINTSTONE COMEDY HOUR** - CBS, Saturdays. Apparently the Flintstone characters and antics will never wear out, though it seems we've seen each sequence a thousand times. Commercials come in clusters of four. In addition to this hour on CBS, independent and affiliated stations are running reruns of reruns of reruns ad infinitum. Stereotype characters.

**FUNKY PHANTOM** - ABC, Saturdays. Animated half-hour "stories" based on Revolutionary Days backgrounds. Uses materials from such classics as "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow," but the derivations are silly and slapstick. Evidence that mediocrity is still entrenched in its Saturday morning TV stronghold. Commercials are 10-plus per half hour.

**HOUNDCATS** - NBC, Saturdays. An animated spin-off of CBS's *Mission: Impossible*. It begins with taped instructions to the Houndcats, then the words: "This message will self-destruct in five seconds." Too bad, but it didn't happen. The whole program went on, including 10 messages from the sponsors. Chases, kidnappings, violence.

**IN THE NEWS** - CBS, Saturdays. These are short programs scattered at the close of other programs throughout the CBS Saturday a. m. schedule. They are produced by CBS News and cover fully a variety of news events and feature materials. Unfortunately, the program segments are scarcely longer than the message of the sponsor, and the "program" is immediately preceded and followed by clusters of other commercials. In several *In the News* segments checked by NABB the introduction and the body of the program totalled less than two minutes - less time than that used for each of the commercial breaks which occur several times within each hour.

**JOE AND THE PUSSYCATS IN OUTER SPACE** - CBS, Saturdays. The addition of "Outer Space" to the title has added no real dimension to the tired formula of chase and smash and blow-up. International intrigue is now interspace intrigue, but the villains and the plots are stamped from the same old mold. Unsuitable for children.

**KID POWER** - ABC, Saturdays. A truly bright series that includes substance in its dialog and story content. Innovative in bringing us, perhaps for the first time, a regular program with natural and unselfconscious integration of minority characters in animation. Characters are from Morrie Turner's "Wee Pals."

**LIDSVILLE** - ABC, Saturdays. This is a live-action show that gets its name from the ingenious hat costumes. Fantasy. Very little story content. May appeal to the very young.

**NEW ZOO REVUE** - Syndicated (Mondays thru Fridays). This show, produced for syndicated release without prior runs on any

## Excessively Violent Shows in Syndication

### BACKLOG OF VIOLENCE

Brutal, Sadistic, Sordid . . .

THIS IS NOT A LIST of all violent programs, nor are these series necessarily the most objectionable for child viewers. All of these, however, are old series with a common pattern of human degradation as a lure to attract thrill-seeking immature viewers.

Most of these are shows that were produced by or for networks. They are now distributed in the syndication market throughout the world. They are grouped here as a quick guide to many of the oldest highly objectionable programs. Many other crime programs call for individual evaluations. These are listed alphabetically, beginning with the programs in the adjacent column.

#### Old Excessively Violent Crime Westerns

|                       |                         |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Bot Masterson         | The Loner               |
| Bronco                | Man Collared Shenandoah |
| The Colifornians      | Ronco Rider             |
| Cheyenne              | Rowhide                 |
| Cimarron Strip        | The Rebel               |
| Colt 45               | Rifleman                |
| Cowboy G-Men          | Riverboat               |
| Custer                | Shotgun Slode           |
| The Dakotas           | Stogecooch West         |
| Frontier Doctor       | Stories of the Century  |
| Guns of Will Sonnett  | Toles of Texas Rangers  |
| Hove Gun, Will Travel | Toles of Wells Fargo    |
| Iron Horse            | The Texon               |
| Jesse James           | Tombstone Territory     |
| Kit Carson            | Trookdown               |
| Loramie               | Twenty-six Men          |
| Lowbreaker            | Wanted, Dead or Alive   |
| Lawman                | Zone Grey Theater       |
| Lone Ranger (films)   |                         |

#### Old Excessively Violent Crime Programs

|                     |                    |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| The Avengers        | Mr. and Mrs. North |
| The Boron           | Mr. Lucky          |
| Bourbon Street Beat | Official Detective |
| Burke's Law         | Peter Gunn         |
| Code Three          | Richard Diamond    |
| The Deputy          | The Saint          |
| The Detectives      | Secret Agent       |
| Felony Squad        | Sheriff of Cochise |
| Green Hornet        | Stote Trooper      |
| Hawaii Eye          | Sunset Strip       |
| Highway Patrol      | Surfside Strip     |
| Honey West          | Tightrope          |
| M-Squad             | Yancy Derringer    |
| Mike Hammer         |                    |

The program descriptions herein are reprinted from the Winter 1972 issue of the "Better Radio and Television" quarterly of the National Association for Better Broadcasting. These pages have been prepared as a supplement to the corresponding Winter 1973 issue of the quarterly.

LISTED IN THE ADJACENT BOX and in the columns beginning below are 135 program series produced for television. Many of these series are comprised of upwards of 100 hour and half-hour episodes. Even so, the programs listed here constitute only a part of the arsenal of crime and violence which remains as the chief stock-in-trade of broadcasters throughout the land. There are many hundreds of crime and horror movies that are aired over and over again in non-network daytime and evening time periods. There are excessively violent series still in circulation that are not listed here. Then there are the current network made-for-TV melodrama movies and the current regular crime series which fill close to half of the network's prime-time hours. (See the Winter 1973 program evaluations issue of NABB's "Better Radio and Television" quarterly.)

There is no doubt that gratuitous violence in TV entertainment continues as the dominating factor in the failure of many broadcasters to meet their program service responsibilities to their communities. Violence is a commodity. Children are prime customers. As yet there are few signs that broadcasters are willing to forego profits merely to protect the welfare of their child audiences.

**ADVENTURES IN PARADISE** - Syndicated. This series is not excessively brutal, but it is too rough for younger viewers. Crime in the South Pacific. Ninety hour-long episodes.

**AMAZING THREE CARTOONS** - Syndicated. Animated. Creatures from outer space. Children involved in terrifying situations. Poor production.

**ASTRO BOY CARTOONS** - Syndicated. A worthless, nightmarish cartoon series. Boy robot fights crime.

**ATOM ANT** - Syndicated. A super insect with violent solutions for all problems. Unsuitable for child audiences.

**GENE AUTRY SHOW** - Syndicated. Excessive violence in a crime-and-killing-are-fun format. Old, but it's still around. Autry still runs it on his own channel 5 in Los Angeles.

**THE AVENGERS** - Syndicated. Stylized, explicit sadism. Often scheduled in early evening hours. This is far too bizarre for younger viewers.

**BATMAN (Live-action)** - Syndicated. When this series was produced for ABC, the network claimed that it was basically satiric humor, but the children do not respond to *Batman* as funny. The lure is violence and morbid suspense. The show disparages social values. Now aired daily in children's hours by some stations, it is more objectionable than ever.

**BATMAN CARTOONS** - Syndicated. Rubbish.

**THE BIG VALLEY** - Syndicated. ABC first scheduled this in late evening hours when its extreme violence and frequently sordid themes were not easily accessible to children. Now it gets multiple showings each week in early hours. NABB suggests that parents evaluate this carefully.

**BIRDMAN** - Syndicated. Mad scientists and elaborate gadgetry. Violent action with superman theme. Originally aired by NBC.

**COMBAT** - Syndicated. War with a touch of reality. Much violent action, with tense and frightening situations, along with compassion for individuals involved. Unsuitable as entertainment for younger children alone.

**COOL McCOOL CARTOONS** - Syndicated. Tedious animated repetition of slapstick violence. At best a waste of time.

**DANIEL BOONE** - Syndicated. This former NBC Thursday evening mainstay is above average for TV westerns, with scenery and characters intriguing for children. Unfortunately, it is unsuitable for unsupervised children because of excessive violence, historical inaccuracy, and the depiction of youngsters in danger.

**DASTARDLY AND MUTTLEY** - Syndicated. Ugly, noisy, and full of pointless violence, this is a contrived formula show derived from past animated mediocrity.

**DEATH VALLEY DAYS** - Syndicated. An unusual western with positive qualities in story and characterizations. Occasional excessive violence makes this unsuitable for unattended children.

**DR. DOOLITTLE CARTOONS** - Syndicated. Animated blight from the NBC network. Kid-show formula with no creative qualities and no relationship to the original Dr. Doolittle story. Random educational items are meaningless in this shoddy surrounding.

**DR. SIMON LOCKE** - Syndicated. A new series that is basically melodramatic hokum. Treatment of social problems is inept.

**EIGHTH MAN CARTOONS** - Syndicated. Grotesque. Frightening. Robots, disguised as men, have superior powers. A prime example of irresponsible programming by any broadcaster who chooses to put it on the air.

**EIGHTY-EIGHTH PRECINCT** - Syndicated. Police melodrama. Better than average, but too sordid and violent for children.

**FANTASTIC FOUR** - Syndicated. Highly objectionable for children with weird super "things" and frightening situations. This animated mediocrity was first aired by ABC.

**FANTASTIC VOYAGE** - Syndicated. Violent pseudo-science with constant menace. Formula junk produced for network TV's Saturday morning children's ghetto.

**FELIX THE CAT** - Syndicated. Old and violent. Mad scientists.

**FIREBALL XL5** - Syndicated. Clever production techniques wasted in a show that is tense, excessively violent, and full of evil characters.

**FLASH GORDON** - Syndicated. If there is a worse show anywhere, the NABP committee has yet to discover it. Terror, torture, cliffhanger suspense.

**THE FUGITIVE** - Syndicated. Entertaining melodrama for mature audiences. Not for children.

**GARRISON'S GORILLAS** - Syndicated. Extreme violence unacceptable for child audiences. Language and action are rough and brutal.

**GIGANTOR CARTOONS** - Syndicated. Grotesque, ugly, and discredited. Gigantor is a robot controlled by a boy who helps the inept authorities. Much violence.

**GIRL FROM UNCLE** - Syndicated. Explicit horror. Torture for fun. Produced by and for NBC, now syndicated.

**GROOVY GOOLIES** - Syndicated. Grotesque and ugly, this is a noisy forced animated series featuring monsters. Ridicule and torture for fun. Explosions. Destruction.

#### TELEVISION VIOLENCE - 1973

Parents cannot afford to relax their concern over the crime and brutality in TV programming merely because the commercial networks have finally been forced by public pressure to clear some of the rubbish and worse from the Saturday morning ghetto for children. Depending on the content of the evening movies, network prime-time programming varies upwards from 50 percent in its dependence on violent melodrama. The non-network hours on hundreds of stations are saturated with cartoons and crime programs that have been thoroughly discredited by the findings and conclusions of social scientists. Broadcasters as a body are still backing up their billion-dollar backlog of sadism, terror, and other forms of violence.

**GULLIVER** - Syndicated. Tiny bad guys against tiny good guys. All the charm of the Gulliver classic is lost in this transition to formula TV animation. Unsuitable for children.

**HARBOR COMMAND** - Syndicated. An old series. Crime around the harbor. Better than most such shows.

**HECKLE AND JECKLE** - Syndicated. Rowdy chase-type animated violence.

**HELP, IT'S THE HAIR BEAR BUNCH** - Syndicated. An ugly Hanna-Barbera cartoon series with humanoid animals escaping from the zoo and outwitting authorities. Worthless.

**HERCULOIDS** - Syndicated. Originated for CBS this is a distasteful, mediocre, menacing animated show dominated by fantastic creatures.

**HIGH CHAPARRAL** - Syndicated. Extreme violence and brutality in many episodes. Not at all suitable for children.

**ALFRED HITCHCOCK SHOW** - Syndicated. Horror with the Hitchcock trademark. Macabre satire that is sordid and terrifying for juveniles.

**HOGAN'S HEROES** - Syndicated. An irresponsible mockery of documented historical tragedy. The Nazis were not comic buffoons, nor were World War II prisoners a joke. This is an unwholesome show that illustrates war as a setting for fun and harmless adventure.

**I SPY** - Syndicated. Well produced melodrama with Bill Cosby and Robert Culp. Now unfortunately aired several times per week in late afternoon or early evening hours. Violence and adult story lines make this a poor choice for unsupervised children.

**THE INVADERS** - Syndicated. Tense melodrama. Hostile creatures from a doomed planet invade earth. Not for children.

**IT TAKES A THIEF** - Syndicated. Crime, with a tongue-in-cheek approach that appeals to adults but is not for children. Now syndicated, it is often scheduled in early hours.

**JONNY QUEST** - Syndicated. Outstanding animation to depict crime, terror and violence. A waste.

**JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH** - Syndicated. This show, first aired by ABC, is one of the most repulsive animated series ever made. Terrifying situations with children in constant peril.

**KIMBA CARTOONS** - Syndicated. Art quality is good, but content is not suitable for children. Small animals in stories that illustrate the Superman theme.



**KING KONG** - Syndicated. An old animated series with disobedient child who commands huge ape. Negative values.

**LANCELOT LINK/SECRET CHIMP** - Syndicated. This show, with live chimps as characters mouthing childish "lines," and with very old cartoons integrated into a variety format, is contrived and ugly. Unacceptable as entertainment for children.

**LANCER** - Syndicated. Hour-long crime westerns. Unsuitable for children.

**LAND OF THE GIANTS** - Syndicated. Technically unimpressive and obviously subjected to budget limitations. Little people and giants. Crime and violence are dominating factors. This is a gimmick show highly objectionable for child audiences.

**LAREDO** - Syndicated. Far too violent for youngsters, but tongue-in-cheek treatment and amusing characters will appeal to many adults.

**LONE RANGER (LIVE ACTION)** - Syndicated. Crime and violence in large measure. Unsuitable for children.

**LONE RANGER CARTOONS** - Syndicated. A crude distillation of the bad elements of the Lone Ranger live action show. Animated and excessively violent mediocrity.

**LONGSTREET** - Syndicated. Well produced detective melodrama with interesting locations. Star's blindness, instead of adding values and depth to story treatment, is used as a gimmick to increase the suspense.

**LOST IN SPACE** - Syndicated. Poor quality science fiction. Bad family pattern for young viewers in that children are disobedient, care is not taken by adults, and stories are left hanging. Nothing to recommend.

**MAGILLA GORILLA CARTOONS** - Syndicated. Noisy, heavy-handed cartoons produced by the Hanna Barbera animation factory. Mediocre and insensitive. Objectionable for children.

**MAN FROM UNCLE** - Syndicated. Horror, sadism, and brutality. There is a veneer of ersatz comedy which gives this an altogether cynical approach so far as youthful viewers are concerned. One of the most objectionable shows for children ever produced.

**MARINE BOY CARTOONS** - Syndicated. One of the very worst animated shows. Child characters in extreme peril. Expresses a relish for torture and destruction of evil characters.

**MARK OF ZORRO** - Syndicated. Old violent series. Better than most, but too tense and rough for younger children.

**MARSHALL DILLON** - Syndicated. Re-runs of old *Gunsmoke* episodes. More violent than present network shows. (See *Gunsmoke*.)

**MAVERICK** - Syndicated. One of the cleverest of TV westerns. Not for children, however. The hero is a professional gambler. Card cheating and other forms of trickery are presented as skilled accomplishments.

**MIGHTY MOUSE CARTOONS** - Syndicated. Poor quality animation on the discredited superman theme. Cruelty. Continuous physical conflict.

**MILTON THE MONSTER CARTOONS** - Syndicated. Tasteless and grotesque animated monsters. Objectionable for children.

**MOBY DICK CARTOONS** - Syndicated. Huge, horrible monsters. An ugly show with meaningless story content.

**MOTOR MOUSE / AUTOCAT** - Syndicated. A little smart mouse and a big dumb cat in a reotype hit and chase program from the Hanna Barbera cartoon factory. Almost plotless. Noisy and violent. Unacceptable as child entertainment.

**THE MUNSTERS** - Syndicated. Too grotesque for children. Grandpa is a vampire. Disturbing story themes.

**NAME OF THE GAME** - Syndicated. Story material is often unsuitable for youngsters. Plots involve social problems - teen drug use, establishment versus youth, campus revolt - but in melodramatic and sometimes shallow treatment. Production is lavish. At times clever, satirical.

**N. Y. P. D.** - Syndicated. A good police show. Strong drama and adult themes. Not suitable for youngsters.

**O'HARA, U. S. TREASURY** - Syndicated. Expertly produced melodrama based on fictitious activities of Treasury agents. Sordid themes. Racial angles are handled fairly and well. Foreigners are portrayed as people, not necessarily evil.

**OUTER LIMITS** - Syndicated. A pioneer program for nightmarish terror devices designed to lure juvenile audiences through fright and horror. Originated by ABC.

**PENELOPE PITSTOP** - Syndicated. Chase, violence, grotesque characters. Unsuitable for children.

**PERRY MASON** - Syndicated. Well produced melodrama. Violence and story themes unsuitable for children.

**THE PERSUADERS** - Syndicated. Tony Curtis in a deplorable distasteful exercise in stylized violence and crime. No concern for human life or human values. A very bad show for children. If there is a redeeming feature for anyone, it must be the prospective early demise of the program itself.

**PETER POTOMAS CARTOONS** - Syndicated. Grotesque. Mediocre.

**POPEYE CARTOONS** - Syndicated. Rough and rowdy. Physical force settles all problems. Unpleasant values.

**RAMAR OF THE JUNGLE** - Syndicated. An atrocious live-action jungle series. Highly objectionable for children.

**RAT PATROL** - Syndicated. War-is-a-game violence. Historically distorted. Frightening.

**RELUCTANT DRAGON AND MR. TOAD** - ABC, Sundays. Noisy, destructive, almost plotless cartoons. Worthless.

**RIFLEMAN** - Syndicated. There is appeal in the father-son relationship, but there's too much crime and violence for children.

**ROBIN HOOD** - Syndicated. Confusion of reality, fantasy, social values. Unsuitable for children.

**ROCKET ROBIN HOOD** - Syndicated. Animated space pseudo science fiction. Extremely objectionable superman rubbish.

**ROY ROGERS** - Syndicated. A prime example of violence-for-fun entertainment. Murder, dull-witted reactions to story situations, and unacceptable philosophy.

**RUN FOR YOUR LIFE** - Syndicated. Better than average melodrama, but unsuitable for youngsters.

**SAMSON AND GOLIATH** - Syndicated. A dismal show with a super boy and a super dog. Crime.



**SHAZZAN CARTOONS** - Syndicated. Child characters in constant peril. A bad show for youngsters.

**SNUFFY SMITH (and other comic strip types)** - Syndicated. These animated segments are widely distributed and aired within programs comprised of several varied elements. Animation seems to emphasize the less appealing aspects of familiar comic strip characters. Cartoons portray stereotypes of incompetent generals, illiterate mountaineers, etc. Shoddy entertainment for children.

**SPACE GHOST CARTOONS** - Syndicated. Outer space with children chased by evil monsters. Grotesque and frightening.

**SPACE KIDETTES CARTOONS** - Syndicated. Children menaced and terrorized by evil outer space monsters.

**SPEED RACER** - Syndicated. An imported limited-animation crime series that is violently violent. Unsuitable for children.

**SPIDER MAN CARTOONS** - Syndicated. Irresponsible terror program originated by ABC.

**SUPER HEROES CARTOONS** - Syndicated. Animated rubbish.

**SUPER PRESIDENT** - Syndicated. An all-time low in bad taste, with the President of the United States in a superman role. NBC was responsible for this direct ideological pitch for totalitarianism. We fear that there may be other broadcasters irresponsible enough to keep it in circulation.

**SUPER SIX CARTOONS** - Syndicated. Another NBC cast-off. Noisy, badly plotted, grotesque.

**SUPERMAN CARTOONS** - Syndicated. Disgraceful and irresponsible fare for the world's youngsters. Threadbare plots, unsuitable values. Children deserve better. First aired on CBS.

**SUPERMAN FILMS** - Syndicated. Murderous, excessively violent preachment of totalitarian ideology. Superman, as the benevolent dictator to his friends and the all-powerful destroyer of his enemies, has set the pattern for much of what is wrong with entertainment on commercial TV. Society, without Superman, is defenseless against the forces of corruption. The show distorts basic democratic concepts.

**TARZAN** - Syndicated. Thin and confusing story themes with a hokey jungle background. A poor show for small children.

**THREE STOOGES (Live action and cartoon)** - Syndicated. Distasteful slapstick, crude and witless. Bad for children.

**THUNDERBIRDS** - Syndicated. Realistic puppet characters and super-modern gadgetry make this a fascinating show from a production standpoint. Stories are highly involved and very suspenseful. Centers on disaster and constant peril. Too tense for younger children.

**TWELVE O'CLOCK HIGH** - Syndicated. Wartime drama that does not stir man-to-man hatreds. Well produced. Adult themes. Recommended for mature audiences.

**ULTRAMAN CARTOONS** - Syndicated. Ultrabrad animation of ultrabrad story material.

**UNCLE WALDO CARTOONS** - Syndicated. Distasteful stereotypes in crime and violence, usually aired with other animated series. Not up to usual Jay Ward standards (i.e. *Bullwinkle*).

**UNDERDOG** - Syndicated. Rough and violent action. Unsuitable for children.

**THE UNTOUCHABLES** - Syndicated. Vicious and brutal. When this was originated by ABC years ago, critic John Crosby called it the worst show ever made for television. There is no reason to change this rating.

**THE VIRGINIAN** - Syndicated. A slow-paced western with attractive outdoor backgrounds. Some episodes are much too violent and tense for child viewers.

**VOYAGE TO THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA** - Syndicated. Originally produced by ABC when networks competed to originate the most nightmarish shows. A bad show for children, with frightening devices built around incredibly far-fetched stories.

**WAGON TRAIN** - Syndicated. (Sometimes aired under "Trailmaster" title.) Good entertainment for adults who like this form of melodrama. Often too frightening for younger children.

**WILD, WILD WEST** - Syndicated. In Los Angeles and elsewhere this highly objectionable show is now running five or six times per week in early evening hours by irresponsible broadcasters. *Wild, Wild West* contains some of the most sadistic and frightening sequences ever produced for television.

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*"While children should not be sheltered from all tragedy, they should be protected from entertainment in which man's brutality to man is not a tragedy, but a formula."*

Dr. Haim Ginott

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network, was pre-sold a year ago in 75 markets. Unfortunately the entertainment quality has not been sufficient to maintain this as an appealing, successful show. A disappointment.

**THE OSMONDS** - ABC, Saturdays. Animated version of the Osmonds singing group. Thin storyline interspersed with songs. Routine limited animation, but the characters are not ugly - a switch from the typical TV treatment. Pleasant enough, except that commercials are excessive.

**ROMAN HOLIDAYS** - NBC, Saturdays. Ancient Rome modernized in one-dimensional fashion. Limited animation accompanied by limited story treatment. At least it doesn't have the callous brutality of the superman cartoons that previously flooded the networks Saturday mornings.

**RUNAROUND** - NBC, Saturdays. A vigorous contest program with kids competing for prizes before studio audience. Prizes are excessive in relationship to the skills and knowledge required of the contestants. An ordinary program.

**SABRINA, THE TEENAGE WITCH** - CBS, Saturdays. A raspy show with comic book teenagers in foolish, contrived situations. Unsuitable for younger children and distasteful for teens.

**SCOOPY DO** - CBS, Saturdays. Fifty-five minutes involved in one continuous story (interrupted seven times for clusters of commercials). Full of cliché hip talk and time-worn situations that were tired when they were new.

**SEALAB 2020** - NBC, Saturdays. Here is an animated series which actually has some values both as entertainment and as suitable fare for youngsters. It deals with a human colony beneath the sea. Played "straight," it includes action, apparent accurate treatment of scientific phenomena, and both black and oriental characters among the human population.

**SUPERSTAR MOVIE** - ABC, Saturdays. This is a series of hour-long animated programs, each based on such pre-established show entities as Jonathan Winters, Yogi Bear and other cartoon characters, the Banana Splits, the Bewitched people - even Germany's World War I Red Baron flying ace. Unfortunately, few if any creative elements have been added, and the show is essentially a tired rehash of warmed-over mediocrity.

**TALKING WITH A GIANT** - NBC, Sundays. Teenagers interview figures in the news or notables in various areas of public interest. This is not intended to be an entertainment program. It will have little appeal for younger children, but it should interest teenagers, and is recommended for teens and also for adults who can gain much from the attitudes of the young participants.

**WONDERAMA** - Syndicated, Sunday mornings. Produced at Metro-media's New York station, this is a noisy, boisterous audience-participation program occupying three consecutive hours. Go-go dance contest for kids each week. Other games. Children are saturated with prizes and commercials. Not recommended by the NABB committee.

## COMMERCIAL NETWORK PRIME-TIME SHOWS

INCLUDED AMONG THE FOLLOWING are a number of shows which technically are not "current network," but which are listed because they are first-run series distributed nationally through "syndication" marketing. Network replacements, other syndicated shows, and some daytime series will be reviewed in the following issue of this quarterly.

**ADAM 12** - NBC, Wednesdays. Police officers shown as competent professionals. Constructive values for young viewers and a starting point for discussions across the generation gap.

**THE ADVENTURER** - Syndicated. This series starring Gene Barry is produced for early evening "access time" relinquished by the networks through FCC edict. Bizarre and violent. Far-fetched situations. Unsuitable for children.

**ALL IN THE FAMILY** - CBS, Saturdays. This show has changed television more than any other program of the past several years. The NABB committee has welcomed *All in the Family* as sparking entertainment for those who enjoy an uninhibited assault on bigotry, but the committee also advises parents to assess the impact of the program on their individual children. Very strong language and subject matter. Families with young children need to evaluate Archie's expressions against their own language standards.

**AMERICA** - NBC, every third Tuesday. Alistair Cooke's personal history of America meticulously filmed by the BBC. Outstanding. Don't miss an episode.

**JULIE ANDREWS HOUR** - ABC, Wednesdays. This is the outstanding variety program on the week's schedule, unfortunately aired at 10 p.m., an hour inappropriate both for family viewing and for a show of this type which cries out for audiences of all ages. This is TV entertainment at its best. We can only hope that stupid scheduling by network management will not dim its highly merited success.

**ANNA AND THE KING** - CBS, Sundays. Creative entertainment that is rare on TV. It is tragic that this was scheduled against

NBC's *Wonderful World of Disney*. In its short life *Anna and the King* was a delightful program that maintained a remarkable quality of production and performance.

**ASSIGNMENT: VIENNA** - ABC, Thursdays (part of *The Men* series which includes *Jigsaw* and *The Delphi Bureau*). A Vienna backdrop for excessively violent melodrama. Psycho criminals. Unsuitable for children.

**BANYON** - NBC, Fridays. This is a Quinn-Martin production, and it bears the QM trademark of graphic violence portrayed in bizarre situations by sadistic psychopaths. Fortunately cancelled.

**THE BOLD ONES** - NBC, Tuesdays. Fine scripts, fine cast, and willingness to tackle mature and even tragic story themes were not enough to save this from cancellation by network management. Another quality victim of the rating system.

**BONANZA** - NBC, Tuesdays. Early episodes of the new season added depth and quality to this long-established series. Then came the management shot that blasted *Bonanza* right off the network. It will be missed on NBC, but syndicated showing of past episodes will continue for years and years.

**THE BRADY BUNCH (live action)** - ABC, Fridays. Combined families of three girls and three boys in a complicated format that leads to superficial treatment of superficial situations. The backgrounds for living are plush and far removed from any taint of economic pressures.

**BRIDGET LOVES BERNIE** - CBS, Saturdays. This started as a trite and corny show, with the depth of a thin coat of lacquer. It inherits an enormous audience (following *All in the Family*) and it just may evolve into an appealing show.

**CAROL BURNETT SHOW** - CBS, Wednesdays. Despite Carol Burnett's talents as a comedienne, this show at times continues to be an embarrassment to those sensitive to taste in their living room entertainment . . . for example, the prolonged sequence on

the September 28 show highlighting the panting urgency of Carol's physical reunion after a 12-year separation from a convict husband who has been granted overnight visiting privileges with his wife in his cell. Much of the material is funny, and the entertainers first-rate, but this is highly unsuitable as family entertainment.

**CANNON** - CBS, Wednesdays. This is a Quinn-Martin production, and therefore it has to uphold the QM trademark emphasizing the portrayal of violence in graphic detail. Expert production. Cannon is an interesting character. For mature viewers this is entertaining melodrama. Okay in its present late time period, it unfortunately will almost certainly hit earlier spots on the schedule when it goes into syndication a season or so from now.

**CIRCUS** - Syndicated. It is an uninspired presentation of overseas circus performances. Occasional moments of entertainment, depending on the quality and nature of the acts at hand.

**COLUMBO** - NBC, Sundays. One of the better melodramas, alternating with others in the network's "Sunday Movie" time period. Crime and violence, but the emphasis is on Peter Falk's characterization of Columbo and his deductive investigations.

**BILL COSBY SHOW** - CBS, Mondays. Cosby, with his really great appeal to youngsters, is dead wrong as the principal of this type of adult variety program. Cosby is not only talented, he stands high as a person in the public light. Program material should sustain his dignity and status as an entertainer.

**DORIS DAY SHOW** - CBS, Mondays. In this series Doris is supposed to be a sophisticated magazine writer, but the sophistication isn't deep enough to prevent actions and decisions of a strictly juvenile nature. Settings are plush; situations froth.

**THE DELPHI BUREAU** - ABC, Thursdays (alternated with Jigsaw and Assignment: Vienna). This just may be the sweepstakes winner for the worst show of the season in any category, in spite of the pressing competition from a number of other series. It's an incredibly inept and muddled crime show with no trace of logical story development.

**DEPARTMENT S** - ABC, Mondays. A British melodrama involving a mysterious Interpol agency. Druggings, sluggings, murders . . . with a Paris background. Production quality is better than for some crime series, but this is essentially just another part of the violence avalanche characterizing the new season.

**DISNEY** - (see WONDERFUL WORLD OF DISNEY).

**SANDY DUNCAN SHOW** - CBS, Sundays. Slapstick situations, and the opening episode and others have been heavily larded with bedroom humor. A shame to place a person of such proven charm and appeal in uninspired and tasteless situations.

**EMERGENCY** - NBC, Saturdays. Well produced sequences involving the activities of a paramedic rescue unit. Trouble upon trouble, concentrated and over-dramatized. Has a positive value in illustrating how paramedics can save lives in emergency situations. Definitely not for children, unless viewing with older members of the family.

**THE F. B. I.** - ABC, Sundays. Again the NABB committee points out that this Association has continuously opposed the presentation of commercial entertainment shows under the official endorsement of local, state, or national governmental bureaus. *The F. B. I.* is not only an illustration of the misuse of official support, it is also excessively violent and sordid in story content. As often as not the F. B. I. is unwittingly portrayed as inept, with solutions achieved by incredibly lucky last-second rescues of terrorized victims of criminal action.

**GOLDDIGGERS** - Syndicated. A variety show with pretty girls and adult comedy. Not for children.

**GUNSMOKE** - CBS, Mondays. When Marshall Dillon leaves Dodge City the town is at the mercy of any crackpot psycho who happens by. A killer holds a respected rancher as hostage and most of the community engages in a despicable manhunt to bring the gunman the victim he wants for a vengeance murder. Doc's gun finally settles the issue as Matt arrives for the last-second denouement. The violence is glossed-over by expert production and the always topflight regulars and guest performers. Unsuitable for unattended children.

**HALL OF FAME** - NBC, intermittent schedule. This may be *Hall of Fame's* best of all seasons. Beginning with "The Hands of Cormac Joyce," filmed on a remote island off the coast of Australia, and continuing with the brilliant "Man Who Came to Dinner," and the reprise of "Snow Goose" the show is unsurpassed in TV's past, present, or probable future.

**HAWAII FIVE-O** - CBS, Tuesdays. Slick production of graphic violence, with the law pitted against thoroughly evil and brutal criminals. The sea around Honolulu is polluted by bodies in oil drums dumped during *Hawaii Five-O* episodes. Explicit detail of bizarre and callous brutality. A very bad show for children.

**HEC RAMSEY** - NBC, Sundays (monthly). This is a new show dominated by Richard Boone as a western lawman who introduces up-to-date crime detection techniques into his law enforcement activities. Interesting, but too violent for children.

**HERE'S LUCY** - CBS, Mondays. On and on and on. Like England, there'll always be a Lucy, and that's good. The NABB committee however, still prefers the earlier *I Love Lucy* programs to the current series.

**HOLLYWOOD SQUARES** - NBC, Fridays (schedule may vary in different cities). A bright and funny contest that entertains in spite of emphasis on lavish prizes and many commercials.

**I'VE GOT A SECRET** - Syndicated. A Goodson-Todman program with Steve Allen as the emcee. Sequences and guests are interesting. Allen is one of TV's brighter talents, combining wit with charm and good taste. The show is notable for not being burdened with lavish prizes.

**IRONSIDE** - NBC, Thursdays. Detective melodrama, with occasional episodes of real class and perception. Good entertainment for adults. Okay for older children, if viewing with family.

**JIGSAW** - ABC, Thursdays (alternates with Assignment: Vienna and The Delphi Bureau). Bizarre action with murder, wild chases, explosions, vicious characters. An unpleasant show with plots that are little more than a framework for violent action and the constant threat of death.

**GEORGE KIRBY COMEDY HOUR** - ABC, Sundays. Kirby is funny, talented, and appealing, and his guests are topflight entertainers. In spite of highlights, material in general is routine.

**KUNG FU** - ABC, Saturdays. David Carradine, educated as a priest in China, now a fugitive in the Old West. There is considerable violence in spite of the principle character's philosophy of peace, but Carradine is appealing in his role and the stories have depth. Unusual entertainment, unsuitable for unattended children.

**LASSIE** - NBC, Saturdays. NBC describes *Lassie* as a series of wholesome family-oriented adventure. Fair enough, but NABB cautions parents that children are deeply disturbed when animals are placed in peril. It sometimes happens here.

**LAUGH-IN** - NBC, Mondays. Parents should evaluate this show and make a thoughtful decision regarding its acceptability for their own family group. The homosexual innuendoes and double entendres are understood and discussed by many thousands of youngsters. For adults, the show can be funny although the humor is wearing thin.



**LET'S MAKE A DEAL** - ABC, Saturdays. All of the bad elements of entertainment and most of the unpleasant characteristics of humans brewed into an incredibly low-grade show.

**LITTLE PEOPLE** - NBC, Fridays. This started out as a surprisingly appealing show with Brian Keith as a pediatrician caring for a wide variety of youngsters in Hawaii. The kids are a delight, and the dialogue has been sharp and witty.

**LOVE, AMERICAN STYLE** - ABC, Fridays (also Daytime). Sometimes funny, sometimes entertaining, but full of time-worn ex-burlesque sequences such as interminable interruptions of privacy of wedding couples just arrived at their hotel suite. Not for children. Scheduling in after-school hours is irresponsible.

**PAUL LYNDE SHOW** - ABC, Wednesdays. Nothing particularly offensive about this, but the show does not have the warm and appealing characters needed to carry a situation comedy from week to week, nor the humanity to recommend it for young viewers.

**MADIGAN** - NBC, Wednesdays. One of the trilogy of NBC's weekly Mystery Movie series. A hard-hitting show dealing in violence, sadistic characters, and heavy-handed police action. Production and performance are first-class, but this is not for children.

**THE MANCINI GENERATION** - Syndicated. A smooth and entertaining series featuring Henry Mancini, his band, and guest performers. Good production.

**MANNIX** - CBS, Sundays. The early episodes of the new season do nothing to soften the *Mannix* trademark of sensational action perpetrated by brutal psycho criminals. Morbid story content.

**MARCUS WELBY** - ABC, Tuesdays. This has always been a quality show, and the early episodes of the new season maintain the established standards. Excellent performances and production. Strong scripts. Consistent high audience ratings illustrate that real drama and authentic professional backgrounds can outdraw the superficial melodrama that floods the TV schedule.

**DEAN MARTIN SHOW** - NBC, Thursdays. Show is based on sex and excessive drinking. Self-indulgence is the chief characteristic. Pleasant music is interspersed. Adults only.

**MASH** - CBS, Sundays. This show, suitable for adults only, would be more appropriately scheduled at a later hour. It is irreverent - toward the military hierarchy, that is - and sharply funny, although at times close to slapstick farce. There has been criticism from some that *MASH* glorifies war. The NABB committee, which has strongly criticized *Hogan's Heroes* for making a joke out of war's miseries, does not believe that this criticism is applicable to *MASH*. The series seems to be more of a satire on the stupidity and futility of armed conflict.

**MAUDE** - CBS, Tuesdays. This is a complex program that is difficult to evaluate in terms of its suitability for children and teenagers. It will disturb some families both for its viewpoints on social issues and its deliberately open approach to situations that have traditionally been matters for whispered inner sanctum consideration. The NABB committee, however, believes that *Maude* is a significant new program, and that it will develop in consistency and appeal. Beatrice Arthur is magnificent as Maude.

**McCLOUD** - NBC, Sundays (alternates with *Columbo* and *Hec Ramsey*). Melodrama, but the emphasis is on McCloud's character. Story treatment is light. Not suitable for unattended children.

**McMILLAN AND WIFE** - NBC, Sundays (alternates with *McCloud*, *Hec Ramsey*, and *Columbo*). Rock Hudson and Susan Saint James in a series reminiscent of the old "Thin Man" movies. Situations are bizarre but relieved by humorous treatment. Topflight production and cast. Not suitable for children.

**MEDICAL CENTER** - CBS, Wednesdays. Contrived soap-opera situations plastered over a medical profession background. Too unrealistic and anxiety-provoking for most young ones.

**MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE** - CBS, Fridays. Murder and other forms of violence for fun. Characters are brutal and evil. Motivation is greed, rather than social reform. Original ingenuity of series has disappeared. Irresponsibly scheduled in its new early time period.

**MOD SQUAD** - ABC, Thursdays. They're always running and they are consistently at the center of the grimest criminal action. Opponents are brutal and savage. The program seems to have lost the veneer of involvement in social issues which marked the series in other seasons. Police action and policies would shame any self-respecting law enforcement department. Certainly a bad show for children and younger teens.

**MARY TYLER MOORE SHOW** - CBS, Saturdays. The best of the week's situation comedies. Bright, intelligent and beautifully produced. Cast is excellent throughout.

**BOB NEWHART** - CBS, Saturdays. This is a very funny and sophisticated comedy played in Newhart's inimitable style. The star fits admirably into his role as a practicing psychologist. One of the handful of really promising new shows.

**ODD COUPLE** - ABC, Fridays. Broad comedy not intended for children. A funny show for adult audiences.

**OWEN MARSHALL, COUNSELOR AT LAW** - ABC, Thursdays. This continues as a provocative dramatic program with thoughtful treatment of very strong themes. Characters are created with an understanding of human frailties. Not at all for children, but recommended for adults and mature teens.

**PARENT GAME** - ABC, Saturdays. Another show from the Chuck Barris stable, that hasn't been cleaned in years (*Dating Game*, *Newlyweds*). Emcee questions couples regarding situations involving children, almost always related to sex. Contestants and questions selected to avoid elements of good-taste.

**PARTRIDGE FAMILY** - ABC, Fridays. This continuing series is not developing characters or family relations. Very superficial. Music gives the show a special appeal for pre-teens.

**POLICE SURGEON** - Syndicated. This is an extension of the preceding season's *Simon Locke* show that miraculously survived its own medicine and hokum prescriptions. A bad show for children and a waste of time for anyone else.

**THE PRICE IS RIGHT** - NBC, Mondays (also Daytime). Vicarious winning of lavish prizes at home must be the audience lure, just as greed by extrovert participants motivates the contestants. An unintended sad commentary on both the tolerance of viewers and the absence of minimum criteria for prime-time programing.

**THE PROTECTORS** - Syndicated. Wild and bizarre and third-rate, even with Robert Vaughn. Lines such as "Do you know what a shotgun does to a man's face?" Incredible stories are merely threads on which to hang excessive violence.

**THE ROOKIES** - ABC, Mondays. At a time when there is a real need for a perceptive and realistic portrayal of the inner workings of modern police policies and procedures, ABC comes up with this. It's too bad. Psycho bombers and other far-out criminals including (Nov. 12) a neck-breaking weirdo who strangles four women but who loves his cat. Also why now would a young man go into police work and what would he learn. Ugly kind of waste.

**ROOM 222** - ABC, Fridays. Sometimes the "message" is a little on the heavy side, but *Room 222* is produced by people who care about the human race and who also know how to create first-class entertainment. Mixture of characters is so natural that viewers are scarcely aware of constructive racial mixture. Recommended.



**SANFORD AND SON** - NBC, Fridays. A funny show, but black actors Redd Foxx and Demond Wilson have the talents to portray much deeper characterizations. Comedy is close to slapstick, and characters close to stereotypes. Even so, this is still a worthwhile departure from standard situation comedies.

**SEARCH** - NBC, Wednesdays. In spite of all the tired gimmicks of hokum melodrama this is almost plotless. It is centered on a World Security Organization that is itself a dead-end trap for viewers searching for entertainment.

**SIXTH SENSE** - ABC, Saturdays. The contrived terror of this show is very disturbing, and the fact that it is leaving the network probably means only that it will show up elsewhere in earlier time periods. Deals with unknown and imagined forces in a frightening way. Specifically bad for immature viewers of any age.

**SONNY AND CHER** - CBS, Fridays. A stylized variety show tailored to the talents of Sonny and Cher Bono. Up-to-the-minute entertainment. Some of the material is of questionable suitability for youngsters.

**STAND UP AND CHEER** - Syndicated. Music with zest and enthusiasm. Talents are first-rate and the production numbers well done. Matter of individual taste.

**STREETS OF SAN FRANCISCO** - ABC, Saturdays. More than ever, this is TV's year of the psycho - the totally unregenerate madman who dominates the crime shows and terrifies the law-abiding because he cannot be dealt with in any rational manner. Quinn Martin, producer of this series, is a master at this type of graphic horror, which the NABB committee feels is specifically unsuitable for young viewers. A very poor program irresponsibly scheduled to lure the mid-evening Saturday juvenile viewers.

**TEMPERATURES RISING** - ABC, Tuesdays. Weightless.

**THRILL SEEKERS** - Syndicated. Dangerous stunts glamorizing the "heroes" who risk their necks for pay or just for the fun of it. Might lead youngsters to imitate reckless stunts.

**UFO** - CBS, Saturdays. This hour-long British import has some of the most realistic gadgetry yet brought to the TV screen. The show is a thoroughly professional and convincing science fiction program that will fascinate many youngsters. The question remains: what does the constant and sometimes terrifying menace of unknown elements do to the outlook of impressionable children who should be looking forward to the exploration of outer space? . . . And what about nightmares among the very young? As this is scheduled at an early hour on Saturday evening, these are factors that should be carefully considered by parents.

**DICK VAN DYKE SHOW** - CBS, Sundays. Nothing very wrong, but nothing very right. This is very lightweight stuff for the likes of Dick Van Dyke, Hope Lange and Carl Reiner. We're apt to forget that these people had - and may still have - real talent.

**WAIT TILL YOUR FATHER GETS HOME** - Syndicated. A new and surprising animated series scheduled in early-evening prime-access periods. Satiric treatment of adult materials, with youngsters involved in situations such as the apparent infidelity of their middle-of-the-road father. Satirizes both Commie-hunting fanatics and hippie youth. Funny, with sharp dialogue, but questionable subject matter and treatment for young viewers.

**THE WALTONS** - CBS, Thursdays. In the view of the NABB committee, this humorous delightful treatment of a Virginia mountain family in the period of the Great Depression is by all odds the season's most significant new program. Excellent writing, production, and performance. Characters are warm and referable. This series will run for years if the network gives it a real chance to build a following.

**LAWRENCE WELK SHOW** - Syndicated. The Welk music, as always. These programs are not network reruns. They are produced directly for their syndicated release.

**WILD KINGDOM** - NBC, Sundays. Wildlife in its natural wilderness habitat. Photography is beautiful and the program has a feeling of real concern for wild and endangered species. Much of interest to viewers of all ages.

**FLIP WILSON SHOW** - NBC, Fridays. Flip Wilson is so personable and so very funny, that it is hard to fault this program. Also, this is probably the most expertly produced of the weekly variety shows, with the exception of the *Julie Andrews Show*. Still, the blue material is there, including the humor based on homosexuality - and this is an early evening show. Acceptability is a matter of family taste.

**WONDERFUL WORLD OF DISNEY** - NBC, Sundays. Many programs in this series are excellent. Scenic backgrounds and wildlife photography are outstanding. When literary classics are aired, however, the Disney scripts often alter the basic content. Real-life adventures often overemphasize killing and other forms of violence.

**YOUNG DOCTOR KILDARE** - Syndicated. This might appeal to daytime soap opera addicts, but it is a mix-up of unstable characters entangled in contrived dramatic situations. Soap opera doctor shows are not for kids.

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"After review of the committee's report and the five volumes of original research undertaken at your request, as well as a review of the previous literature on the subject, my professional response today is that the broadcasters should be put on notice. The overwhelming consensus and the unanimous Scientific Advisory Committee's report indicates that televised violence, indeed, does have an adverse effect on certain members of our society.

"While the committee report is carefully phrased and qualified in language acceptable to social scientists, it is clear to me that the causal relationship between televised violence and antisocial behavior is sufficient to warrant appropriate and immediate remedial action."

Jesse L. Steinfeld  
United States Surgeon General

March 21, 1972

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## REVIEW OF NEW SEASON . . .

(Continued from Page 2)

throughout the TV scene. Scripts and subject matter that would have been banned no more than two or three years ago by all three networks are now commonplace in many of the most viewed programs, including those in early evening hours when many millions of children are among the audiences.

There are numerous illustrations. But there is a great gap in taste and acceptability between the forthright dialog of *All in the Family* or *Maude* and the outright vulgarity of some of sexual and homosexual skits in the *Carol Burnett Show* or the *Dean Martin Show*.

By necessity, program evaluations are largely the product of subjective reactions. To the NABB committee acceptability is not so much a matter of *what* is shown as *how* it is shown.

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